

United States District Court
Western District of Texas
Austin Division

United States of America,
Plaintiff,

v.

Natin Paul a/k/a Nate Paul,
Defendant.

No. A-23-CR-100-DAE

Government's Proposed Voir Dire Questions

The Government respectfully requests that the Court ask the following questions during jury selection.¹

1. Please raise your hand if you have strong feelings, either positive or negative, regarding the federal government.
 - a. What are your feelings regarding the federal government?
 - b. Are your feelings so strong that putting them aside, and basing your verdict solely on the evidence and the judge's legal instructions, would be difficult or impossible?
2. Please raise your hand if you have strong feelings, either positive or negative, regarding law enforcement.
 - a. What are your feelings regarding law enforcement?
 - b. Are your feelings so strong that putting them aside, and basing your verdict solely on the evidence and the judge's legal instructions, would be difficult or impossible?
3. Please raise your hand if you have strong feelings, either positive or negative, regarding the FBI and/or the United States Department of Justice.
 - a. What are your feelings regarding the FBI and/or the United States Department of Justice?
 - b. Are your feelings so strong that putting them aside, and basing your verdict solely on the evidence and the judge's legal instructions, would be difficult or impossible?

¹ The government may amend this request after the parties meet and confer regarding a proposed jury questionnaire, pursuant to this Court's sealed Order of November 21, 2024. (Order [doc. 145] at 2.)

4. Please raise your hand if you believe that the FBI or prosecutors pursue cases based on politics, or that this case was brought for political reasons?
 - a. Would you automatically believe that witnesses called by the prosecution are less credible than other witnesses because of your belief?
 - b. Would you require the government to meet a burden of proof higher than proof beyond a reasonable doubt because of your belief?
 - c. Is your belief so strong that putting it aside, and basing your verdict solely on the evidence and the judge's legal instructions, would be difficult or impossible?
5. Neither of the crimes charged in this indictment—Wire Fraud and False Statements to Lenders—requires the Government to prove that any person or entity suffered a financial loss. Please raise your hand if you would be reluctant or unwilling to convict the defendant, even though the government proved his guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, based on the absence of financial losses.
6. A juror's duty is to base his or her verdict solely upon the evidence and the judge's legal instructions, without prejudice or sympathy. If you are chosen for this jury, that is the promise you will make and the oath you will take before being accepted by the parties as a juror. The parties have the right to expect nothing less.

Please raise your hand if you would be unable to fulfill that duty because of any prejudice or sympathy that you feel toward either party.

7. Please raise your hand if you, or a close friend or family member, have been arrested for, or accused of, a crime (including DWI) other than a minor traffic offense. You may approach the bench if you would like to discuss it privately.
 - a. Was it you or a friend or family member?
 - b. What crime?
 - c. When?
 - d. What was the result of the case?
 - e. Do you feel you were treated fairly by police, prosecutors, and the court?
 - f. Would anything about this experience make it difficult or impossible for you to render a verdict based solely on the evidence and the judge's legal instructions?

8. If the defendant is convicted of any crime, deciding his punishment will be the Court's job. The law does not allow jurors to consider or discuss sentencing or punishment when reaching a verdict on the defendant's guilt.
 - a. Please raise your hand if you believe that reaching a decision about the defendant's guilt without considering punishment would be difficult or impossible.
 - b. Please raise your hand if you would be unwilling to decide about the defendant's guilt simply because you would not be allowed to decide his punishment.
9. Please raise your hand if you, or a close friend or family member, have had a legal dispute with the federal government. You may approach the bench if you would like to discuss it privately.
 - a. Did you have the dispute, or did a friend or family member have it?
 - b. When and where did the dispute occur; what was the nature of it; and what was the result of it?
 - c. Were you, or your friend or family member, treated fairly or unfairly by the federal government's representatives?
 - d. If you became a juror in this case, would you be biased against the government, or against witnesses who work in law enforcement or for the government, because of the dispute you've described?
10. Please raise your hand if you, or a close friend or family member, have been the victim of a fraudulent scheme. Considering that the defendant in this case has been accused of fraud, would your experience affect your ability to perform the duties of a juror?
11. A defendant has a constitutional right not to testify at trial, and the law states that a juror may not consider a defendant's decision not to testify in determining whether the defendant is guilty. A defendant may choose not to testify for any number of reasons. Keeping in mind the defendant's absolute constitutional right not to testify, please raise your hand if would hold a decision not to testify against the defendant or consider it evidence of his guilt.
12. As a juror, one of your jobs would be to assess the credibility of witnesses. After a witness testified, you might believe all, some, or none of that witness's testimony. You would not be allowed, however, to "prejudge" the credibility of a witness—that is, decide *in advance* that you believe or disbelieve a witness simply because of their profession, age, appearance, or any other factor. Please raise your hand if you would be more or less inclined to believe the testimony of a witness because of their occupation, including being a government agent or employee, even before hearing the witness's testimony.

13. The government has the burden of proving the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. A reasonable doubt is doubt based upon reason and common sense after careful and impartial consideration of all the evidence in the case.

Please raise your hand if you would hold the Government to a higher standard. For example, please raise your hand if you would only find the defendant guilty if the government proved his guilt beyond all possible doubt.

14. Please raise your hand if you have strongly held personal beliefs (religious, philosophical, or otherwise) that would prevent you from sitting in judgment of another person and voting on that person's guilt.

15. Please raise your hand if you know of any reason why you might not be suitable to sit on this jury because of the nature of the charges, or for any other reason we have not yet discussed.

Respectfully submitted,

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Certificate of Service

On January 12, 2025, I filed the foregoing, and caused a copy to be served on Defendants' counsel of record, via the Court's Electronic Case File system.

/s Alan M. Buie
Alan M. Buie
Assistant United States Attorney